



# KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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## **LOW-ACHIEVING SCHOOLS IDENTIFIED**

(FRANKFORT, Ky.) – In compliance with federal requirements for [School Improvement Grants](#), ten Kentucky public schools have been identified as “persistently low-achieving” (PLA), based on criteria in state and federal statutes and regulations.

The ten schools identified are:

DISTRICT	SCHOOL	TITLE I FUNDED?
Carter County	East Carter County High	N
Christian County	Christian County High	N
Greenup County	Greenup County High	N
Jefferson County	Iroquois High	Y
Jefferson County	Doss High	Y
Jefferson County	Fairdale High	Y
Jefferson County	Waggener Traditional High	Y
Jefferson County	Southern High	Y
Jefferson County	Seneca High	N
Martin County	Sheldon Clark High	N

These schools will be eligible for federal School Improvement Grant (SIG) funding in the 2011-12 school year and are receiving assistance to enable them to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP) as defined under the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act.

As mandated by state and federal statute and regulation, the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) must annually identify PLAs that are eligible for SIG funding. Federal guidelines provide for identification of three tiers of low-performing schools, and the ten schools identified today are in federal Tier I and Tier II.

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Kentucky's definitions, processes and options for improvement are based on the language contained in KRS 160.346, which was amended by [House Bill 176](#) (HB 176), legislation related to persistently low-performing schools.

HB 176 was passed by the 2010 General Assembly and signed into law by Gov. Steve Beshear in January 2010. Implementation details for HB 176 are clarified by state regulation [703 KAR 5:180](#), which was approved by the Kentucky Board of Education, also in January 2010.

In the spring of 2010, Kentucky identified the first group of PLAs, and those schools are receiving SIG funding and assistance to help them achieve AYP. Schools began implementing SIG-related school improvement plans in the 2010-11 school year, but based on recently released data, many of the ten schools have shown early progress.

DISTRICT	SCHOOL	2009 PERCENT OF STUDENTS SCORING AT PROFICIENT OR HIGHER IN READING/MATH	2010 PERCENT OF STUDENTS SCORING AT PROFICIENT OR HIGHER IN READING/MATH	DIFFERENCE 2009 to 2010	MADE AYP IN 2010?
Caverna Independent	Caverna High	37.91	34.83	-3.08	N
Jefferson County	The Academy @ Shawnee	21.90	13.62	-8.28	N
Jefferson County	Western Middle	26.69	21.63	-5.06	N
Jefferson County	Frost Middle	27.97	29.11	1.14	N
Jefferson County	Western High School	29.50	29.76	0.26	N
Jefferson County	Valley Traditional High	29.67	30.67	1	N
Jefferson County	Fern Creek Traditional High	38.19	44.42	6.23	N
Lawrence County	Lawrence County High	33.47	41.22	7.75	N
Leslie County	Leslie County High	30.06	54.31	24.25	Y
Metcalfe County	Metcalfe County High	35.15	48.57	13.42	Y

All but three schools improved the percentages of students scoring at the highest levels in state-level reading and mathematics assessments from 2009 to 2010. Two schools – Leslie County High and Metcalfe County High – made AYP in 2010.

These 10 schools will continue to implement the improvement plans they developed under the requirements of the SIG program. SIG funding for these schools continues until the 2012-13 school year.

Kentucky's criteria for identifying PLAs incorporates an average of the percentage of students proficient or higher in reading and mathematics on the state assessments under KRS 158.6455.

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**Federal Tier I**

- 1) A Title I school that is in the lowest five percent or lowest five scoring schools, whichever is greater, of all Title I schools that are identified in any one of the school improvement categories under the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 and that failed to make AYP for three consecutive years.

Or

- 2) A Title I high school whose graduation rate, based on the state's approved graduation rate calculation, has been 60 percent or less for three consecutive years.

**Federal Tier II**

- 1) A non-Title I school that contains grades 7-12, or any combination thereof, that is in the lowest five percent or lowest five scoring schools, whichever is greater, of all non-Title I schools that contain grades 7-12 or any combination thereof, that also has at least 35 percent or greater poverty as defined in NCLB and has failed to make AYP for three consecutive years.

Or

- 2) A non-Title I high school whose graduation rate, based on the state's approved graduation rate calculation, has been 60 percent or less for three consecutive years.

**Federal Tier III**

All Title I schools that are identified in any school improvement category under NCLB and are not included in the definitions of Federal Tier I.

Financial assistance for PLAs comes from federal SIG 1003(g) funds. Under Section 1003(g) of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), SIGs are designed to improve student achievement in Title I schools identified for improvement, corrective action or restructuring, as well as schools that are eligible for, but don't receive, Title I funding and who have been identified as persistently low-achieving. The goal of the program is to enable those schools to make AYP and exit improvement status.

Kentucky schools that are identified as Tier I and Tier II in the 2010-11 school year are eligible to receive SIG funds to assist them in implementing intervention models. Tier III schools are eligible to receive SIG funds to implement an improvement plan.

The 10 schools identified as PLAs for 2010-11 will receive leadership assessments. These leadership assessments will be administered by teams of current and former educators, parents and others trained in the process. The assessments rely heavily on specific indicators found in the [\*Standards and Indicators for School Improvement\*](#) to determine the capacity of the school's principal, school council

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and district leadership. In addition, a Working Conditions Survey will provide information about conditions within the school that support student achievement. As outlined in state regulation [703 KAR 5:180](#), other items in the leadership assessments include classroom observations, stakeholder interviews and portfolios of school records.

Reports for each leadership assessment will provide relevant findings, recommendations and next steps to help the identified schools and their districts make improvements.

Schools that are newly or previously identified as Tier III schools may request a Scholastic Audit based on the *Standards and Indicators for School Improvement* as a strategy for school improvement. These requests must be funded by the school and/or district requesting them; SIG funds may be used as a source. Reports for each Scholastic Audit will include relevant facts and recommendations for next steps to help the identified schools and their districts make improvements.

Each PLA school is assigned three Educational Recovery (ER) staff -- an Educational Recovery Leader to mentor the principal, an Educational Recovery Specialist for English/language arts and another for mathematics to work with teachers as they improve instruction and teaching strategies in these two critical areas.

Each year of the SIG funding term, KDE must determine if the schools have met their goals and are making progress toward improvement to continue funding for each year of the three years in the grant period. Quarterly reporting to KDE, in addition to feedback from the ER staff, will determine if schools are progressing and districts are supporting their efforts.

Title I schools that make AYP for two consecutive years will no longer be subject to consequences under NCLB and therefore will no longer be considered PLAs. Schools will continue to receive SIG funding for the period defined, even if they are no longer identified as PLAs.

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